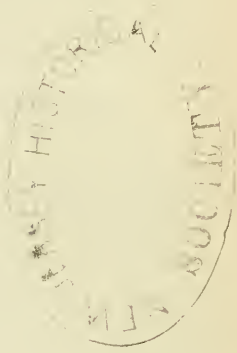
From S. Alofsen.
Jersey City, May 16, 1863.

Christ's Kingdom not of this World.

THE CHURCH

VIEWED IN ITS RELATION TO THE STATE.



A SERMON,

BY W. F. BRAND,

RECTOR OF S. MARY'S CHURCH, HARFORD COUNTY, MD.

BALTIMORE:
JAMES S. WATERS.

1862.

MD Room
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SERMON.

St. John, xviii. 36.—My Kingdom is not of this World.

Jesus bound as a malefactor, mocked and spit upon, as one already condemned by his own people, standing before a Gentile ruler and soon to be given over to the bitter death of the Cross,—it is Jesus under such circumstances who before Pontius Pilate witnessed, "My Kingdom is not of this world." Of such a King what shall we expect the kingdom to be? A kingdom whose great ones are among the meek and lowly; for it is enough that the servant be as his lord, and the disciple as his master. Whose rich ones, are rich only in good works, and though possessing all things, count all things but as dross, which perish with the using. Whose wise one's seek wisdom from above; that wisdom which abides with purity of heart; and who may be counted among the simple and foolish, by the learned and prudent of the world. Whose heroes are timid women and unresisting men, cowards in the world's estimation, who give their back to the smiter, and being reviled, commit themselves unto the Lord. Whose defenders are those who cast away the sword and the spear; who rely not upon an arm of flesh, but prevail, when they are overcome, and are mighty when, prostrate before God, they confess their utter weakness. Whose conquerors know nothing of the laurel wreath, or the fierce courage with which it is gained on the battle field; but may be the helpless

pauper upon a dying pillow,—the captive into whose soul the iron has entered,—the martyr at the stake,—the unknown good man who sinks under the pressure of humble duties,—the tottering little one who believes in Jesus;—for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven.

As was their LORD, so are they who are subjects of His Kingdom. They only shall enter into the glories of that kingdom who seek to be like their LORD, meek of spirit and lowly of heart, ready to become poor that others might be made rich, ready to lay down life that others might live.

Not like to the governments of this world is that of Christ. The kingdom of Christ is spiritual; His rule is exercised on the hearts and consciences of men. "It cometh not with observation . . . for, behold, the kingdom of GOD is within you." The citizens of this kingdom are those who are "renewed in the spirit of their mind; and have put on the new man which, after GOD, is created in righteousness and true holiness." GOD alone seeth the heart; He alone, therefore, knoweth who they are who shall, in the end, enter upon the glories of the kingdom in heaven. But, though thus hidden in the knowledge of GOD, each true member must be; the kingdom over which Christ rules has its outward sign and embodiment. The Church of God is a term interchangeable with that of the kingdom of GOD. The assembly of the glorified saints in heaven are the Church triumphant—triumphant in Christ their head. The body of believers here on earth working out their salvation, are the Church militant, contending against the foes of GOD in the strength which Christ, their head, supplies. The Church is that body of which Christ is the head, from union with which head all strength flows, and all glory is attained; a body ordained to life, and yet, the members of which may be dead—waiting to be cut off. There is, I say, one phase of the kingdom of Christ which is outward and visible. Christ left in the world a standard to which men should be gathered as His followers; and standard bearers to carry the pledge of salvation to the end of the world. Into fellowship with the Apostles, believers were drawn, "and the LORD added to the Church daily such as should be saved." Even,

as in the olden time, God called out of the world one special family to whom and to whose children the promises were given; to whom He gave laws and ordinances and a priesthood; even so, Christ ordained His Church—extended, rather, that which existed, to all nations, and bestowed on it manifold gifts, mysteries, and stewards of their mysteries, "pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints and the edifying of the body of Christ." This kingdom of Christ is in the world, but not of the world: it is still a spiritual kingdom. Its ordinances, if they be not vivified by the Spirit, are twice dead. Its rulers, if they have not grace to touch the conscience of those over whom they are placed, are powerless: if the law be not written on the heart, there is no penalty to enforce their rules. Their sway touches not the body, and if the soul reject what is meant for its health only, censure falls to the ground—say, rather, is treasured up against a day of final account. The teachers of this kingdom have no inducements but those which are above and beyond the world. The promises they are taught to offer are seen by faith only: the threats they are commanded to exhibit have terrors only for those who cannot escape a God-imprinted dread of a future life. Though thus spiritual, the Church is none the less visible. Blessed be God that Christ left to us in the flesh a rule—a kingdom suited to men not yet delivered from the flesh. A Church often persecuted and brought low, yet ever enduring as the unbroken promise of the Lord to be with her to the end of the world. A Church co-existing with any and every rule; in all climes, among the civilized or the savage; unaffected in any essential character by any vicissitude which may attend earthly rule; adapting itself to all the changes which have succeeded each other on earth—autocratic power, kingly rule, democratic government—destined, in the end, to survive all, even as the rock cut out without hands grew to be a great mountain and filled the whole earth, the images of earthly power having crumbled before it. Alas, that we are constrained to confess it! A Church thus to triumph in the end, unconquerable, yet capable of being betrayed, and full often suffering at the hands of her friends. Entrusted, of

necessity, to sinful men, (if left to the guardianship of man at all,) and, therefore, often to man's eyes, stained, and wounded, and hindered, and humbled by the sins of those who should have exhibited her always as heaven appointed, "having no spot," "fair as the moon, terrible as an army with banners."

When I said above that the church, the kingdom of Christ, is not like to the governments of this world, I did not mean that in its origin it is wholly different. No, all government is of GOD: from Him all just rule acquires its force. As parents govern their children through the right bestowed by GOD the common Father of us all, so by Him "kings reign and princes decree justice,"—by Him "who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and LORD of lords." What ever title civil rulers bear, and by whatever usages among men they be raised to power, whether born to an Imperial throne, or chosen to a Presidential chair—the divinity which hedges about a king, and the awe which should attend on the ruler of every nation—this is from GOD, who instituted varying civil government "for the punishment of evil doers and for the praise of them that do well;" from GOD who invested government with the dread power which simple man is forbidden to usurp, the bearing of the sword, the power of life and death. But the one GOD, the Governor of all the earth who has ordained "the Powers that be;" He, the Father of Spirits, has instituted His one unchanging church for a very different and a higher purpose. Civil government deals with man as capable of happiness and liable to distress here on earth: churchly rule looks only to perfection of the spirit and preparation for a life beyond earth. Even when (as is not unfrequently the case) the same command is laid down by the state and by the church, the inducement to obedience is vastly different,—as different as time and eternity. But as all of GOD's works harmonize, without a doubt did not the evil that is in man the agent contravene, although wholly distinct, church and state, would mutually support each other: alas! in a world of sin it is not as we might conceive it might be.

In the world, the citizen of the Heavenly kingdom is of necessity the subject or the citizen of some earthly government. Still comes home to us the declaration of our Lord, "My kingdom is not of this world." When His truth is forgotten or modified, evil cannot but follow. The church and the state as contemplated in the gospel are not only distinct governments, but being of different spheres should ever be kept separate: even where, in GOD'S providence, "these spheres touch, each should be seen to round off from the other, true to its own centre." Unhappily all men have not always so thought. In the first three centuries, although not with even growth or perfectness, in the church "mightily grew the word of GOD and prevailed." Never since has there been the same comparative increase: and this not because of the law of nature in accordance with which the first days of being know the most rapid changes, but also because then clearly the church was most filled with the spirit of the LORD, and most nearly kept to the instructions imparted by those who had planted it throughout the world. The church was humbled like her Master; and like Him at times most cruelly persecuted. But by the beginning of the fourth century Christianity had so far prevailed over heathenism, that instead of persecution honors began to assail the faith: in the Roman world Christians were sufficiently numerous and powerful to be courted. Emperors began to be protectors, and the church learned to forget wherein her strength lay: like the silly strong man of old, she confided the secret of her strength to treachery and was shorn of her glory. From the days of Constantine to the present, in various degrees the church has been the slave and the sport of those who had wrongful power over her. Very many of her corruptions are due to her dependence on state; while it might be retorted that many, very many wrongs done to men by civil government have had religion as their pretext. In our own once so blessed land, with the pangs of a new birth as it were, the church once again has acquired her true status—perfect independence of the state,—asking nothing but the defence due to all men in common, and delivered from all human interference. Oh blessed boon of

heaven! But how many there are in our land who do not yet comprehend the blessing gained after so many centuries, nor understand how, if the church can claim exemption from all interference of civil power, it is simply because each is wholly independent of the other and instituted for different purposes. As little right has the church to discuss the acts of government and to canvass forms of government, as civil government has to establish tests of orthodoxy, or to intrude certain rulers or forms of rule on Christ's heritage. How do men forget the purpose for which the pulpit was ordained when they can listen to political harangues,—listen to anything but the teaching of the saving truths which the gospel makes known for the salvation of souls! What but discord can grow out of an attempt to join Christ and the world? In one word, Christians as such, clergy and laity as members of the church, have nothing whatever to do with forms of government or the administration of civil government. The democrat and the royalist, the slave owner of the South, and those who sympathize with him, on the one hand,—and the free-soiler and the abolitionist on the other, the Lincolnite and the rebel should be able to come together to the House of God, assured that there is one place on earth where jarring of earthly strife cannot reach. In the church of God should be heard only of heaven and of preparation for heaven.

But is it true that christian teaching as given in the Bible so utterly ignores the government of the world? Before God, yes! so far as forms and individual rulers are concerned.

It is God's purpose to fit man for eternity by proper discharge of duty on earth,—earthly duty as well as heavenly. There is nothing to be called duty which the Christian may not discharge with a consciousness that God's eye rests on him approvingly. Therefore as the relation of parent and child, master and slave is recognized, so is that of civil ruler and ruled; and whether in the one state or the other, a Christian is bound *as a Christian*, to discharge his duty. As a consequence while in the New Testament the person to whom, or the form of government to which, allegiance is

due, is left to be ascertained by reasonings apart from the New Testament, government being supposed to be recognized, for it, reverence, obedience, custom, is claimed as a duty to GOD. Principles are laid down, and the application of these principles is left to the conscience of men under varying circumstances.

No word is given us any where, by which we may test the claims of those who are above us. No reasoning from Scripture words can ever, to any manly mind, make it obligatory on a citizen, because a Christian, to submit to an assumption of authority, or to a violation of the compact of society. Whether under king or governor. Yet let man be careful how he ventures to violate the principles which GOD'S word gives for his governance in the duty of reverence, obedience, loyalty to properly constituted authority. The follower of Christ the LORD is so frequently addressed as the citizen of a heavenly kingdom,—and this kingdom is exalted so far above the glories of earth, that there would seem that one who has his "conversation in heaven," must be in some danger of forgetting that he is not, by his freedom in Christ, delivered from the control of earthly government;—in danger of forgetting that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Indeed we know that there have been bodies of men called Christians, who have thus perverted GOD'S word. Perhaps on this account we have such frequent and plain precepts in the writings of the Apostles, respecting submission "to every ordinance of man for the LORD'S sake; whether it be unto the king as supreme, or unto governors as unto them that are sent by him." While then we do, on most sure warrant, assert the entire separation of the church and state, as distinct and independent governments, having different ends in view; we yet do as clearly acknowledge that admission to the heavenly kingdom does not sever any obligation under earthly rule; but rather enforces by a higher sanction all such human laws as are not contrary to GOD'S word. There is one duty towards the state in so many words imposed by GOD, respecting which I have now something to say:—namely—the duty of prayer for "all that are in authority." Surely one would think this to be a very slight tax to a

Christian mind. And yet I have often known the command to be a stumbling block. In times of warm political contest, that one party may succeed there must come disappointment to opponents. I have known in times past defeated politicians,—Christians and good churchmen too, as they would have called themselves,—who could not bring themselves to pray for the President against whom they had voted and electioneered. And in these unhappy days of discord, there are many in our state who refuse to use the prayer set forth in our service for all in authority; and when it is uttered by the minister, mentally cease to be among the worshippers.

Now what is the ground for this unwillingness to comply with the order of the church? The precept is a plain one. "I exhort therefore that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; for kings and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty, for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour." 1 Tim. ii, 1 and 2.

The mere fact that the man in authority is not the man of our choice, is no reason for refusal: our choice is not spoken of in the command. It is enough that he be in authority, to make it a Christian obligation to offer supplications in his behalf. Is he a fool, or a wicked man? The more reason to pray. Is he our enemy,—has he done us, or our country harm? So much the stronger cause for obedience to the Divine precept: for we know Who it is Who has taught us by word and by example to pray for our enemies, and for those who despitefully use us. Is the fact that the ruler abuses his power, or attained it wrongfully, an excuse? Nay, we know who they were who ruled at the very time when the precept was given;—how they usurped power, and tyrannically used it. Can the fact that we do not approve the form of government, be made a pretext? Assuredly not; without our approval is to give force to God's word. The republican dissenter in England, the papist, or the baptist in Russia, the down trodden Christian of every name in Turkey,—all of them as God fearing men,

pray for those who govern them: while they may also pray that God would look upon their servitude, and deliver them as He did His people of old.

But granting the general duty, (and I really do not see how any one can doubt it,) there may be something in the wording of a prayer to which conscience cannot assent. Doubtless. I have seen prayers set forth to be used in this time of civil war, to which I myself would not, and could not, say Amen. Prayers not only for, but against: prayers that God would not only stretch forth His hand in blessing, but that He would also bare his arm in vengeance. But do the forms which concern us thus teach us? I trow not. Let us examine the wording of the prayer in our service which is felt by some of tender conscience to be a mockery, or a burden. Its title is, "A prayer for the President of the United States, and all in civil authority." Is there no such person as President of the United States—no such office? If there be not, our Courts and our Legislature are at fault. I cannot discuss this question. For this President and all others in civil authority, we are taught to pray. "So replenish them with the grace of Thy Holy Spirit, that they may always incline to Thy will, and walk in Thy way. Endue them plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant them in health and prosperity long to live; and finally, after this life, to attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now as this wording is beautiful, so, what terms could be more general? Under what circumstances,—under what grinding tyranny, could they not be used by one who feels bound to obey the Divine command laid on him? Surely I need not say that we not only may, but that we should feel, constrained to pray for spiritual blessings on the very worst of oppressing enemies—to pray for their temporal good likewise, so far as they personally are concerned; for their life, for their health, for all that they may count good, if what they so deem be not counter to the good of other men, and to the supreme will of God. Objection can be made, I trust, to only one word of our prayer; and this only through misapprehension. "Grant them in health and prosperity long to live." There are

those who, at this time, cannot pray for the prosperity of the existing President, because they do not desire the success of his government schemes. But is any one who uses our form required so to do? By no means. Human language is of necessity imperfect. In the older form of this prayer, the word *wealth* stands instead of *prosperity*. The change was made because times, and the sordid nature of man had attached the sense of earthly riches, to what means *good*. If in England, or her Colonies, we would in the Church, pray for the Queen: "Grant her in health and *wealth* long to live," but surely no one could be so gross in mind as to be able to find no better interpretation to the word *wealth* than one, expressing abundance of gold and silver.* We may see here how the proneness of man to worldliness corrupts language. Believe me, sinful corruption is at work when one can not pray for the prosperity of an evil man. True it is, the Psalmist has said, "I have seen the wicked in such prosperity." In his irreligious frame of mind he had believed them to be prosperous. The term is used in the sense in which the wicked use it;—for success in accomplishment of wicked or worldly desires. You can not suppose that you are called on to pray for this. No! We can not ask GOD to bless any thing that is counter to His holy will. There is no true prosperity apart from the blessing of GOD; no such prosperity as we dare pray for is found in any course which violates any course of truth, justice and mercy.

During a former war there was a toast which was considered a test of patriotism, and as such rejected by one of the then parties,—"Our country! May she always be right: right, or wrong, may she always prosper." Earth-blinded men could not see that our country could not be prosperous unless also right. In our prayers, the word prosperity, must vary with the suppliants understanding of what is

* Emerson, in his English Traits, says, "The religion of England believes in a Providence which does not treat with levity a pound sterling. They put up no Socratic prayer, much less any saintly prayer for the Queen's mind; ask neither for light nor right, but say bluntly 'Grant her in health and wealth long to live.'" To talk smartly about light and right, does not always insure the guidance of either.

right,—what is in accordance with God's will. With your own views, as citizens, of what is right at this time, or at any other, I, as your preacher have nothing to do. But as one accountable to God,—and in the fear of God,—I can say to any such as may share in the scruples now avowed by many in our state,—scruples which I have often met with in years past,—to such I do say,—you are in no danger of weakening conscience by false interpretation, should you pray for the President's prosperity in the sense, that God of His mercy may confound every evil council; make weak every arm raised against right; and bring him and those who think with him, to a knowledge of the truth, and especially of true Constitutional liberty.

The foregoing Sermon was preached in the course of parochial instruction in June, 1861. My object was to impress upon the few people who heard me, that they and I, as members of Christ's kingdom have nothing to do with the strife of politics. At least the important truth was clearly asserted that the Church and the State, ordained of God for different ends, are wholly distinct, and independent each of the other; and that men should not seek to join what God instituted apart. The painful conviction has been brought home to me, that this truth is not received as it should be; and in the hope that the plain declaration, if nothing more, of earnest conviction may not be without some good result, I venture to print what I have preached. When the thoughts here offered were first uttered, the disposition of the Church to forget its proper sphere was alone looked upon; but now there rises to view an opposite and greater danger,—the danger of assumption by the State of rule over the Church. Since the breaking down of the establishment of religion (where established,) by the great rebellion of '76, we, as a people have been loud in our boasts of the liberty wherewith we have been made free in Christ. This boast of freedom is perhaps like many another. In the view of many men, freedom is the right to have our own way: liberty is to be extended to others until we feel a necessity to impose restraints. The Constitution of the United States has expressly declared that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. And this article seemed a reflex of the general sentiment of our land

that religion should be free. Every where, a while since, had need been, the indignant cry would have been uttered, "We will have no Church and State." But what does this cry mean? This, and all of this. "We will have no support given to any Church by the State; no interference by the State in any matter of any Church." Are all men now bent upon upholding this entire severance of two rules which, for the good of each, should be kept apart? In the Churches almost do we need a Leighton to break the universal custom of preaching the times, and for one be only anxious to preach Christ. Reports come to us from almost every quarter of how loyalty to what the preacher considers government, is the common theme in the pulpit, rather than loyalty to Him whose kingdom is not of this world. While the course pursued in some Ecclesiastical bodies is a most painful token of the growth of evil. Brethren pleading, in Christ's name, to be looked on only as in Christ, have been cast off, virtually as unworthy the name of brethren, because of difference, not in faith or Christian practice, but in politics. Bodies of Christian men, organized and acting as in the name of the Church have been eager to prove the loyalty of their Church, by doing what they could only do as individual citizens. New questions are propounded to those who feel called to preach Christ with their Church's authority. No longer is it enough to be sound in the faith, pure in morals, earnest in spirit, apt to teach; the aspirant must also be prepared to denounce one class of his fellow believers, and to band with another,—he must be orthodox in politics as well as in religion. In gratitude, but with trembling, the acknowledgment is made that all religious bodies have not been thus invaded by the Spirit which rules the world.

When religious men thus act, will the state be long backward to impose the yoke on the neck willingly bowed down? It is to be feared not. Witness the Bill which was brought forward in the late Assembly of Maryland.

I do not know what action was taken on it. I speak only of the copy from "the original manuscript," which appeared in the newspapers the day after the Bill was offered in the House of Delegates. According to what was so reported, its effect, if it had become an Act, would have been to compel every Preacher and Minister of the Gospel, "exercising his functions as such," to enter into political strife; for it would have bound him by an oath, not only to "bear true allegiance to the State of Maryland, and support the Constitution and the laws thereof," not only to abstain from giving support or countenance to any plan of separating ~~their~~ State from the Union—but also, "to the best of his ability to resist every attempt, by whomsoever made, to effect any such object," or failing thus to testify his loyalty within a set time, under pain and penalty, "he shall (says the Bill) cease and desist from holding his office, commission, official or other position, right or immunity, which shall thereon be deemed vacated and discontinued, and another person may at once be chosen to fill his place." Failing to comply with the dictate of the State (had this proposed Bill received the sanction of the Legislature,) every Minister of God would have been forced to cease from "exercising his functions as such." Sent of God to preach the Gospel, he must keep silence even from good words; he must neither warn the transgressor, nor guide the doubtful,

nor console the broken-hearted; from his pulpit he must not proclaim his message, nor in private, according to his office, attempt to teach. Commanded to baptize, he must turn back from the font the infant brought for the Redeemer's blessing; and to the adult who enquires, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" He must answer, not God's law, but man's prohibition. Appointed as a Steward of the mysteries of God, and as such, accountable to God, he must look upon souls famishing, and yet keep back in obedience to human law the bread of life eternal. There were other classes of citizens, besides the Clergy, whose fidelity it was proposed to test. But all of these, Officers, Lawyers, Traders, Teachers even (if they were Public School Teachers who were meant,) all of these hold "their official or other position" under the State. Not so the Clergy, except the Church be subject to the State. What does the civil law know of a Minister of religion, excepting as a citizen, who, because of a character not stamped by the State, is, for some supposed public benefit, excluded from certain civil rights and duties? This only. Religions have been commonly connected with marriage; the sanctity of marriage, in the estimate of the great bulk of our people, has been connected with the blessing of the Church;—therefore, the Ministers of religion have been made, in Maryland, the Officer of State before whom the civil contract of marriage is to be acknowledged. This right to join in matrimony,—not the right to bless, but to legitimate marriage is confessedly of the State. In some countries, as in France, it is taken out of the hands of the Clergy and might so be here without tort. But this is not a function of a Minister as such. No! All his rights, as such, are derived from God: and what we claim is, that man shall not assume to take away, or restrain, what man does not even claim to have bestowed. Be it noted, there is no desire to exempt any man, because a Clergyman, from the obligations resting on all citizens alike: the present writer assuredly entertains none such, an article of his Church expressly declaring that "the power of the Civil Magistrate extendeth to all men, as well Clergy or Laity, in all things temporal." Let an oath of Allegiance be required of all men within the State and no reason could be offered why any Minister should be freed from the common obligation: he would then be approached as a citizen, a member of the state rightfully under it's rule; and on conviction of disobedience would be liable to punishment,—not for continuing, without permission from the State, to preach and pray and administer the Sacraments—but for neglecting the duty of a citizen. But should civil power, under whatever plea of advantage, claim the right to exact an oath of a minister of religion, as such, it would be the duty of the Church to dispute the claim: for, to admit the right, would be to acknowledge the right to declare the penalty of disobedience,—to enforce obedience in office by the pain of deposition from office: that is to say, the Church would, by non-resistance, confess that she exercises spiritual functions at the will of the temporal ruler. The writer, and those who think with him, receive the canons and the teaching of the Church of England where applicable to, and not rejected by, their own Church. It is known that in the writings of the Doctors of the Church of England, the glorious lights of the Christian world, pas-

sages may be pointed out which seem to contradict, in part, what has been said,—passages which pointedly assert the right of the civil power to exact oaths of the clergy, as a test of allegiance to the State: but it must not be forgotten that these doctors were familiar with the thought that Church and State are connected, and should so be: in their day there existed a compact between the State and the established religion; and all other forms, if tolerated, were yet suspect,—toleration was the utmost stretch of liberality. Whatever be true of the Church in England, in America all religionists who claim to be constituted as the Church of God,—even as they receive and ask, as a right, no other protection or immunity than that extended to all corporate bodies,—so they are alike free from the control of the State. Nothing can be exacted of those on whom nothing has been bestowed: and we hesitate not to denounce as tyranny any such State action, as has been contemplated as needful, in these troublous times.

Had this Bill received the sanction of the Legislature, I do trust in God there would have been found men ready to bear cheerfully the consequences of standing up for the liberties of Christ's heritage; prompt, in the spirit of the Apostles, to say with them when straitly commanded not to speak in the name of Jesus, "We ought to obey God, rather than men." Men who while they might be ready, as taught in the Bible, to obey them that have the rule over them,—believing that they are servants of God and as such have one master only to whom they must render an account,—would refuse at all hazards to recognize the right of the civil ruler to restrain the exercise of spiritual functions. And I doubt not the lay members of the church would have been as prompt to defend her rights and their rights.

In the good providence of God this danger has for the present passed away. But who can tell that it shall not again threaten? This was not the proposition of one man only, nor of one acting with advice of a few; but more than two thousand citizens of Baltimore prayed the Legislature to pass this Bill. The object they had in view was, we may presume, to uphold civil government; which is doubtless a Christian duty: but the means by which they sought this good end were as unwise as tyrannical. When such tokens of evil are seen, it is wise that we should distinctly assert that the kingdom of Christ is and of right ought to be separate from the governments of this world.—the church independent of the state.